

MS #172026.01 (5211)

Claim 1. (currently amended) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for a bridge server in a multimedia conference to select one video stream from video streams of multiple participants of the multimedia conference for forwarding to a client, the steps comprising:

receiving simultaneously multimedia conferencing data from the multiple participants, the multimedia conference data including a video stream from each of the participants;

monitoring participant events of the multimedia conference;

providing a participant state table indicating an activity state variable for each participant;

updating the conferencing activity states state variable in the participant state table for each of the participants according to the participant events;

periodically computing a weight for each of the participants based on the conferencing activity states state variable of said each participant;

identifying a participant having a highest weight among the participants; and

selecting from the video streams in the multimedia conferencing data received from the participants one video stream corresponding to the identified participant having the highest weight for viewing by the client.

Claim 2. (original) A computer-readable medium as in claim 1, wherein the multiple participants are connected to the bridge server through a multicast network.

Claim 3. (original) A computer-readable medium as in claim 2, having further computer-executable instructions for performing the step of transmitting to the client an audio stream containing a mixture of audio signals from the multiple participants of the network conference.

Claim 4. (original) A computer-readable medium as in claim 1, wherein the step of computing the weight includes determining whether said each participant is currently being shown to the client.

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Claim 5. (original) A computer-readable medium as in claim 4, wherein the step of computing the weight includes determining a length of time for which said each participant has been shown to the client if said each participant is currently being shown.

Claim 6. (original) A computer-readable medium as in claim 4, wherein the step of computing the weight includes determining whether said each participant is talking.

Claim 7. (original) A computer-readable medium as in claim 1, wherein the step of computing the weight includes determining a length of time for which said each participant has not been shown to the client.

Claim 8. (canceled)

Claim 9. (original) A computer-readable medium as in claim 1, wherein the multimedia conference streams include a combined video stream containing multiple substreams each corresponding to one of the multiple participants, and wherein the step of receiving includes demultiplexing the combined video stream into a plurality of individual video streams each including one of the substreams in the combined video stream.

Claim 10. (currently amended) A system for conducting a multimedia network, comprising:

a plurality of participants each providing multimedia conferencing data including video signals and audio signals;

a client in conference with the participants, the client capable of receiving a video stream corresponding to one of the participants at a time;

a participant state table stored in a memory and indicating an activity state variable for each participant; and

a bridge server connected to the participants through a network and having a point-to-point connection with the client, the bridge server receiving simultaneously the multimedia conferencing data including a video stream from each of the participants, updating ~~conferencing the~~ activity states state variable stored in the memory for each

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participant in the participant state table, periodically computing a weight of said each participant based on the ~~conferencing~~ activity states state variable of said each participant, identifying a participant having a highest weight among the participants, and selecting from the received multimedia conferencing data a video stream corresponding to the identified participant having the highest weight for transmission to the client for viewing.

Claim 11. (original) A system as in claim 10, wherein the plurality of participants and the bridge server are connected through a multicast network.

Claim 12. (original) A system as in claim 10, wherein the bridge server further transmits to the client an audio stream containing a mixture of audio signals from the participants of the network conference.

Claim 13. (original) A system as in claim 10, wherein the computing of weight by the bridge server includes determining whether said each participant is currently being shown to the client.

Claim 14. (original) A system as in claim 13, wherein the computing of weight by the bridge server includes determining a length of time for which said each participant has been shown to the client if said each participant is currently being shown.

Claim 15. (original) A system as in claim 13, wherein the computing of weight by the bridge server includes determining whether said each participant is talking.

Claim 16. (original) A system as in claim 10, wherein the computing of weight by the bridge server includes determining a length of time for which said each participant has not been shown to the client.

Claim 17. (canceled)

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Claim 18. (original) A system as in claim 10, wherein the multimedia conferencing data received by the bridge server include a combined video stream having substreams corresponding to the participants, and wherein the bridge server demultiplexes the combined video stream into a plurality of individual video streams each including one of the substreams in the combined video stream.

Claim 19. (new) A computer-readable medium as in claim 1, wherein the activity state variables include at least one of the following variables: time since the participant was last shown, time for which this participant's video has been showing to the client, time since this participant started talking, an indicator that the participant is currently talking, an indicator that the participant is currently sending video, and an indicator that the participant's video is currently being sent to the other participants.

Claim 20. (new) A computer-readable medium as in claim 1, wherein the participant state table includes at least one of the following variables: participant identifier, participant name, activity state variables, and weight; and

wherein the participant events include at least one of the following events: a participant started sending video, a participant stopped sending video, a participant joined the conference, a participant started sending audio, a participant stopped sending audio, and a participant left the conference.

Claim 21. (new) A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a data structure, comprising:

a participant field representing a participant providing a video stream to a conference;

an activity state field representing the status of the participant within the conference wherein the activity state field is updated when a participant event occurs; and

a data field representing a weight of the participant wherein the data field is periodically computed from the activity state field of the participant, the weight determining the selection of the video stream of the participant for transmission as part of the conference.

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Claim 22. (new) The computer readable medium as in claim 21, wherein the participant field includes information relating to at least one of the following:

a participant identifier and a participant name; and

wherein the activity state field includes information relating to at least one of the following:

a time since the video stream of the participant was last transmitted as part of the conference, a time for which the video stream of the participant has been transmitted to other participants, a time since the participant started talking, an indicator that the participant is currently talking, an indicator that the participant is currently transmitting video, and an indicator that the video stream of the participant is currently being transmitted to other participants.